Wichita Eagle

ST. PETER'S ON THE MOUNT.

Above the world it seems—this house of God,
Beside its walls—the green and daisied sod,
Beneath—the woods and meadows spreading far,
On either side the mountains form a wall.
Alone it stands—like some bright guiding star
Serenely shedding light and joy o'er all.

Nearer to heaven it seems—we climb the hill,
And at the prospect soul and being thrill.
The wide world lies below at peace and rest,
Beyond the waters of Lake Asquam roll.
And that same wind that stirs the water's breast
Brings sweet refreshment to the weary soul.

Nature and God are one—and as we kneel
The Holy Spirit's influence we feel.
There no discordant note—the singing bird
That carols merrily outside the door
Disturbeth not the reading of the word—
There is a harmony not known before.

The perfect peace of God for which we pray
Seems to be with us on our homeward way.
And as we look behind, the church of stone,
Encircled by the earth's most ancient hills,
Above the mountains, seems to stand alone,
The while its shadow all the valley fills.
—Churchman.

A PIKETOWN ROMANCE.

Old Peter Cummins was "deown with the rheumatiz." Consequently he was very peevish.

He badgered and bullied all who came within hearing of his stentorian voice, from his youngest daughter Martha to his meek, pale faced old wife.

He found fault with his one hired man to such an extent that the latter "quit," leaving the plow in the furrow in the back lot, and went in search of a place where, as he expressed it, he could "chaw his hash in peace, an' not be cussed at w'enever he went in ear shot of the house."

The hired man had not been a rapid worker, and as Peter had been ailing for weeks his farm work was in a very backward and chaotic condition.

The plowing was no more than half done, the potatoes were not planted, the corn ground was not "fitted," and it was already the middle of May.

The farm hands for miles around had all secured situations, and had been at work for weeks. There was not one to be had for love or money.

It looked as though Peter Cummins would have to worry through the season as best he could without a hired man.

Under the circumstances Peter did not improve either in health or temper

"Drat the rheumatiz!" cried he. "If I could only git about I'd hitch up ole Jerry an' drive till I found a hired man—an' one good for suthin', too. But here I am tied down—bound an' gagged—with this pesky rheumatiz. Ow, wow, wow! wot a tinge thet air was."

Although Peter was, in a certain sense, bound to his chair, he was very far from stating the truth when he said he was gagged, as his wife, his daughters and every chance passerby could have testified.

Although plowing and planting were at a standstill on the farm the dairy work went on as briskly as ever, with Miss Susan Cummins as general manager and Miss Martha an able assistant.

The seventeen cows were milked bright and early every morning; the milk was "set" in large, shallow pans, and the cream, at the proper time, was churned, salted and "worked" into the sweetest of golden butter.

This was not considered hard work by the tall, broad shouldered, rosy cheeked, blue eyed, flaxen haired Susan, who at 19 years of age was as strong, healthy and cheerful as a girl well could be.

Martha, two years younger, although equally as light hearted as her sister, was different in many ways. She resembled her mother, who, when a "gal," as she often told her daughters, was considered a great beauty.

Martha had inherited her mother's coal black hair and eyes, creamy complexion and slim, slender form. She was very pretty, and not a farmer boy for miles around but loved the ground she walked on—especially when she lightly tripped over a portion of her father's fertile soil.

The Cummins homestead would have been fairly overrun with admirers of the two girls (for there were many who liked the robust Susan's style of beauty) but for one thing. They one and all had a wholesome fear and dread of Peter's rasping, ear piercing, foghorn voice. He also, when not down with "rheumatiz," wielded with much dexterity and accuracy a No. 10 cowhide boot.

So, because of the voice and the boot, the girls, though greatly admired, had no "steady company."

The nearest approach to it was the three calls Hiram Stubbs had made on Susan.

On his first visit Hiram was very anxious, apparently, to secure Peter's advice as to what he had better do with his "nine acre lot—seed it down er plant it ag'in."

Peter, being in a cheerful mood, for a wonder, expatiated and dwelt on the delightful subject at such great length, and Hiram, to propitiate him, gave him such marked and undivided attention, that Susan remained unnoticed, save at such rare intervals as Peter went to the door to expectorate. On these occasions Hiram rolled a prominent pewter eye toward the damsel, and made a hurried and whispered observation on the state of the weather or solicitously inquired as to her health.

The youth's second visit, ostensibly for the purpose of procuring a recipe for a spavin liniment, passed off in much the same way.

When Hiram, in his store clothes, presented himself at the kitchen door of the Cummins homestead for the third time there was a coolness in the reception tendered him by the old husbandman that should have warned him of breakers ahead.

Peter, being tired and cross, retired early, and the young man, not to lose any precious time, at once commenced edging his chair toward the blushing and expectant damsel.

He reached her side as soon as could be expected under the circumstances, and had just succeeded in partially surrounding her buxom form with an arm by no means too long, when the two were thrown apart as by an electric shock. They had heard the following words, uttered in a tone of voice that could be heard a full mile:

"Hi, there, Susan! Send thet air tow-headed fool hum, an' mog your boots tew bed. Dew ye hear?"

It was well understood that when Peter said a thing he meant it. He was not only handy with his No. 10 boots, but was a very muscular man and a noted "rough and tumble" wrestler.

In fact Peter stated no more than the truth when he said:

"I kin down anything within ten mile in Piketown, with one exception—thet's the rheumatiz."

He was also a great worker, being able to "out-hoe, out-mow, out-chop an' out-eat" any man that he ever had in his employ.

"Martha," said Susan a day or two after the hired man had taken his departure, "we are out of sugar, molasses and spice, and you'll have to go to the village with some butter and do some trading."

Of course Martha was perfectly willing to do so.

She would not only have a pleasant ride, but would also have the pleasure of seeing Joe Smith, who "clerked it" in Piketown's one store.

Accordingly, after packing a few dozen eggs in oats and placing several rolls of golden butter in an earthenware jar, "Old Jerry" was hitched up, and Martha, with a great fluttering of ribbons and rustling of skirts, climbed into the old buggy wagon and started for Piketown.

She reached the village without mishap, did her trading, and after conversing for some time with Joe Smith headed old Jerry for home.

She had left the village about two miles behind when she saw a young man trudging along ahead of her in the dusty road, a dilapidated carpet bag in hand.

He seemed to be footsore and tired, and as Martha was a kind hearted little thing, and as there was plenty of room in the big, coffin boxed buggy, she halted and asked him to ride.

The invitation was accepted with alacrity, and Martha found herself seated beside a broad shouldered, trim built young man, perhaps 25 years of age. His curly chestnut hair was closely cropped, and his sandy mustache had been recently trimmed. His dark and flashing eye proclaimed him to be a quick tempered individual, while his square, massive jaw denoted determination, if not obstinacy and pugnacity.

"Have you walked far?" queried Martha after old Jerry had jogged on some distance.

"About fifteen miles," was the reply. "Fact is I'm looking for a job. Do you know of any one around here who would like to hire a man for a few months?"

"Why, yes," said Martha. "Papa's hired man has left him, his farm work is in terrible shape and he is sick. I am quite sure he will hire you. You, however, will find him very cross. He is always that way when he is ill."

"Oh, I shall not mind that in the least," replied the young man cheerfully. "I am out of a job and out of money, and under the circumstances would work for Lucifer himself. May I inquire your name?"

"My name is Martha Cummins. And yours"——

"Is Robert Sharp."

At that moment old Jerry turned into the Cummins door yard and sedately walked up to the kitchen door.

Martha, with the assistance of Robert Sharp, unloaded her purchases, and taking Jerry by the bridle started for the barn.

"Let me be your hostler," said the stranger, stepping forward. "You go into the house and I will attend to the horse."

The young man soon returned to the house, and was ushered into the old farmer's presence.

As Peter was greatly in need of help, and Robert Sharp was greatly in need of employment, a bargain satisfactory to both was soon struck.

Peter at once saw that his new hired man was a great worker.

Within a week he had the plowing all done and a part of the ground ready for planting.

The old husbandman's mind being thus placed at rest he soon got the better of his rheumatism and went to work with a will.

As has been already stated, Peter prided himself on the fact that he had never had an employe who was able to do as much work in a day as could he.

It had always been his custom to "race it" with every new man he hired.

When after a more or less close and exciting contest his antagonist either tacitly or openly admitted his defeat Peter would say:

"Wal, yew dew wot ye kin. Yew can't hev more uv a cat than her skin; an' it hain't to be expected that yew, er any man in this part uv the kentry, kin keep his eend up with old Peter. Dew wot ye kin."

One evening, having fully recovered his health and strength, Peter said to Robert Sharp:

"I'm goin' deown tew Piketown this evenin' tew buy me a new hoe. Tew-morrer, yew know, we air tew plant the Green lot tew w'ite flint corn. Yew go to bed arly an' rest jest all yew kin, fer yew'll hev tew git right tew the front tew-morrer, an' don't yew furgit it."

Bright and early the next morning the two men started for the "Green lot," the hired man carrying a bag of seed corn, while Peter flourished two bright new hoes.

Said the farmer as soon as the lot was reached:

"I'm jest a-going tew make this new hoe fly tewday. This piece has got tew be planted afore night."

With these words, having filled to overflowing his planting bag with corn and his mouth with tobacco, he struck out at a terrific rate of speed, the hired man following after.

The sun having just arisen Peter had discarded his wide brimmed straw hat, and for greater freedom of movement had thrown his suspender from his right shoulder. This latter useful article of wearing apparel having become detached in front streamed out behind like the tail of a kite. His long gray hair was blown about his swarthy face, his blue checked shirt, filled with wind, puffed out like a balloon; his tan colored overalls bagged at the knee, and his mammoth boots, pushed along through the soft, sandy soil, made a shallow canal on each side of his row.

Firmly grasping in one big hand his new hoe and in the other no less than a half pint of corn Peter, puffing and blowing like a locomotive, worked himself across the field at a high rate of speed.

Looking behind him occasionally the exulting husbandman would yell:

"Come on. Come on. Thought yew knew heow to plant corn. Git a gait on ye. Git a gait on ye. Haw! haw! haw!"

At the end of the first "bout" the hired man was several yards behind, and Peter, in a high state of exultation and perspiration, took a double shuffle on a fence board which chanced to lay upon the ground near by. He then took a "chaw of terbacker," refilled his planting bag, spat upon his hands, and, seizing his new hoe, struck out with renewed vigor.

"I guess I'll let out a link or two this bout," said the sandy mustached young man to himself.

He did so, and not only passed the hitherto invincible one, but kept the lead until the dinner hour sounded.

Yes, Peter had at last found his match—and a little more.

Although he struggled manfully and well, and received the assistance of many chews of tobacco; although he shoved his sleeves far above his elbows, removed his boots and rolled up his tan colored overalls; although he wielded his new hoe with a desperation born of despair, and paid no attention as to whether he dropped one or twenty kernels in a hill, he at length had to own himself out-planted, beaten, vanquished. He did it in these words:

"This tarnal new hoe hangs out tew much."

Robert Sharp could not only out-plant Peter, but he could, and did, out-hoe, out-mow and out-chop him.

One would naturally suppose that the farmer would have been greatly pleased with so able an assistant. He was not, however. He disliked the young man because he had taken from him his prominence as a worker.

It was known for miles around that Peter Cummins had at last found a man who was his superior at all kinds of husbandry.

The old tiller of the soil grew to hate his vanquisher.

The young man's presence was a constant reminder to Peter of the many defeats he had suffered at his hands.

And so he began to cast about for an excuse, good or bad, for discharging him.

He found one sooner than he expected.

One moonlight evening in August Peter paid his nearest neighbor a visit, and coming home through his back lane at about 9 o'clock came spat upon a couple seated on a log beneath the wide spreading branches of a chestnut tree.

The young man's arm encircled the maiden's slim waist, her head rested on his broad shoulder, and their hands were clasped.

As they were deeply absorbed in taking an astronomical observation the presence of a third party was for a moment unobserved.

Then Martha, lowering her eyes from the man in the moon to the man on the earth, saw and recognized her sire. Robert Sharp saw him at nearly the same instant.

"Martha!" roared the irate husbandman as though his daughter was a mile away, "you mog your boots tew the house this minute. Come, neow, git. As fur yew (turning to the hired man) yew come with me an' I'll pay yew off, an' then, yew tarnal cuss, git off'n my farm. Ye're nuthin' but a pesky, no-account tramp, anyway. If I sarved ye right I'd give ye a lift with my boot."

Peter started toward the young man as though he really intended to bring into action his noted No. 10.

Why didn't he do so?

Perhaps he saw a glitter in Robert's dark eye, and an ominous clinching of his sunburned hand that convinced him that "discretion was the better part of valor."

Robert Sharp went to the farm house, received his wages, and thrusting his few belongings into his old carpet bag left the Cummins homestead, as Peter thought, forever.

Before taking his departure he asked to see Martha for a moment, but the request was greeted with a stentorian "No!"

Susan, however, bade him a cordial farewell, and slyly slipped into his hand a tightly rolled piece of paper.

The next day after dismissing his hired man Peter went to Piketown, and falling in with some old cronies did not leave the village till nearly 10 o'clock at night.

When within about a mile of his home he met a rapidly driven wagon in which were seated a man and woman.

Although the woman was heavily veiled and the man pulled his hat well down over his eyes the old farmer at once recognized his younger daughter and his former hired man.

"Whoa!" roared Peter, swinging his horse across the road, thus stopping the further progress of the evidently eloping couple.

"Whoa! Wot does this mean, you tarnal tramp? Git out uv thet wagon at onct, Martha, an' come with me. D'ye hear? Come, neow, mog yer boots."

As the young lady made no move preparatory to obeying the order, but on the contrary clung hysterically to her companion, Peter, in order to enforce his command, leaped from his wagon and approached the other vehicle.

No sooner had he done so than Robert Sharp, freeing himself from Martha, jumped to the ground, seized the husbandman by the collar of his snuff colored coat, pulled him forward, pushed him backward, and, tripping him with lightning like rapidity, threw him with such force as to make the ground fairly shake.

Having done this he backed Peter's horse into the roadside ditch, clambered into his wagon and drove rapidly away.

Although Peter was so dazed by his fall that he saw ten thousand stars, he notwithstanding managed to get to his feet before the runaways had completely disappeared from view.

"Whoa! whoa!" he roared in a voice that would put to shame any fog horn ever invented.

"Whoa! Whoa! Come back! Come back, Martha, an' git married tew hum. Wait till a week frum tew-night, an' I'll git ye up a weddin' that'll beat anything ever seen within ten miles uv Piketown."

Martha and Robert, being less than a mile away, heard Peter's words, and after a moment's consultation the ex-hired man turned his horse about and drove to the scene of the late impromptu wrestling match.

"Bob," shouted Peter, holding his hand out toward the young man, "yew kin hev the gal in welcome. D'ye hear? In welcome. Ye're worthy uv her. Any man that outplants, outhoes and outmows old Pete Cummins, an' tew cap all slams him on his back the way yew hev, is worthy uv the best gal within ten mile uv Piketown."

The week following the above related incident Robert Sharp and Martha Cummins were married.

The wedding festivities were of a high order and on a very elaborate scale.

The supper went beyond anything in the culinary line that had been known in that vicinity within the memory of "the oldest inhabitants."

The Piketown full string band was in attendance, and Peter, resplendent in a white shirt with a very high collar, a long tailed black coat, blue jean trousers and newly tallowed boots, danced a breakdown with a vigor and abandon unknown to the rising generation.

The boys all "danced till broad daylight, and went home with the girls in the morning."

Peter is very proud of his son-in-law, and permits him to do nearly all the farm work and a share of the planning.

He is willing at any time to lay a wager that "Bob Sharp—my son-in-law—kin outplant, outhoe, outmow an' outrassel any man within ten miles uv Piketown."—Thomas Burke in Detroit Free Press.

Where She Lived.

It is strange how difficult some persons find it to answer a simple question directly. Even the fact that time, other people's time, is valuable does not disturb their enjoyment in chatting of various things which have no bearing on the two or three words which their interlocutors wait more or less patiently to hear. The following conversation took place not long ago in a busy savings bank.

Said the cashier, "Where do you live, madam?"

"Well, I just came up from the Cape. My sister's just been married, and her husband has a fine place down there. He's doing well, is Amelia's husband, and I'm glad of it. They say"——

"Excuse me, madam," interrupted the cashier, "I wish to fill in this blank with your residence."

"Well, I was going to tell you. She wanted me to go down and visit her at the Cape. So I've been down there a month. She wouldn't hardly let me come up today. She said I must stay a week longer, anyway. But I thought"—

Again the official protested, "What is your address now?"

"As I was saying, I am going to look for a boarding place. I don't know yet where I'll stay. I want a place to suit me for all winter. And I can't decide"—She paused a minute for breath, and seemed rather surprised to be asked sternly:

"Where have you been staying? That address will do."

"Why, at my sister's, down on the Cape. I never make long visits, but I've been there more than a month, she being just married and thinking a sight of me."

"Yes; where does your sister live?"

"Down on the Cape"——

"Whereabouts on the Cape? What town?"

"Athensville."

And the cashier and four customers who had been waiting breathed a sigh of relief as she turned away murmuring that Athensville wasn't really a town, but that her married sister liked living there very well.—Youth's Companion.

A Unique Fernery.

In the main glass covered building in the Botanical garden, amid all the wealth of tropical plants, Mr. Smith, the superintendent of that department of the annex to the Agricultural department proper (which is kept up as a governmental source for bouquets and boutonnaires for senators and members), has arranged a carved stone fernery that has a history, and it has also given him some trouble to explain its history, at the expense of his character for truthfulness.

When the old senate chamber doors were taken down the superintendent of the Botanical gardens had the stone arch above one of the doors removed to his main conservatories, where it was placed contiguous to an artificial pool of water or fountain, and made a mantel for arborescent plants that for effective beauty surpasses nature herself. Unfortunately in a jocular moment he told some one that the stone mantel was a relic from the ruins of Herculaneum. For months after wives and daughters of senators, members and others interested in the antiquaries bothered him almost unto death for its unique history.

Withal its history, as having been the arch of a door of the American senate chamber under which walked Webster, Clay, Calhoun and a galaxy of manhood whose equal the Acropolis and Parthenon never encompassed, should make it sacred, as a simple fernery, as a part of American history.—Washington Post.

A Roundabout Rejection.

"When will you become my wife, Ethel?"

"On the 29th day of February, 1891."

"But there's no such day."

"That's the size of it."—New York Sun.

Calling the House Roll.

It is the custom for the clerk calling the roll to prefix the word "Mister" to each name, but before he has gone far he begins to retrench his expense of vocal powers. This leads to some strange combinations of sound. In the beginning he calls "Mr. Abbett," "Mr. Adams," "Mr. Alderson," and a few more distinctly enough, but by the time he reaches the G's he begins to telescope the title, and calls "M'ster Cannon," "M'ster Carter," and so on. When he has gone a little further he drops off some more, and it becomes "'ster Fitch," "'ster Flower," "'ster Gear," etc. This holds holds out pretty well into the H's, but at last the two words become one, and "Mr. Hopkins" and "Mr. Houk" sound like "Stropkins" and "Strouk." Down in the M's it undergoes another change. The sound of the "r" is lost, and "Mr. Mason," "Mr. McAdoo" and "Mr. Morrow" become "Stumason," "Stumacadoo" and "Stumorrow." This goes on through the O's and the P's, "Mr. Oates" being "Stoates" and "Mr. Peel" coming out "Stupheel." In the R's it shifts a little, and "Mr. Ray" becomes "Stray," while "Mr. Rife" is "Strife."—Washington Post.

Home of Adam and Eve.

The Chicago Tribune has a letter from the quill of a traveler whose rare good luck it is to loaf a little in the Garden of Eden—otherwise on the Seychelles islands, in the Indian ocean, 1,400 miles east of Aden and 1,000 from Zanzibar. It was "Chinese" Gordon who tried to prove these islands to be identical with Eden. The islands number 114. They were built by coral insects and have the richest soil in the world. Palms grow 100 feet high. The white beaches are the most beautiful on the round earth. No one need work, for the trees are constantly in fruit, and the many tinted fishes that flash through the clear waters are as toothsome as they can be. Turtles abound. The people live to a great age. No hurricanes ever strike the islands. They constitute, indeed, an earthly paradise.

BILL NYE'S LITTLE JOKE.

He Turns the Tables on the "Boys" in a Mining Camp.

They were sitting in the lobby of Young's reading the papers and enjoying their cigars. One was a middle aged, pleasant faced man, who was reading Bill Nye, and chuckling softly to himself as he read. His evident enjoyment pleased the other members of the little group, and they began to smile.

Finally the middle aged man finished his story and tossed the paper aside with a laugh. Then he turned to his neighbor and said:

"I always make it a point to read Bill Nye's letters every week. They always amuse me, and I never read one without thinking of the first time I ever saw Bill. It was in a little western mining camp. I was then looking after some mining interests, and I guess Bill was there for the same purpose. At any rate he was there. Well, the only common meeting place in the camp was the barroom of the rough board shanty that served for a hotel. Bill was in the habit of strolling in there of an evening with the rest of the fellows. He was tall and lank, and awkward as a young calf, and the men used to chaff him unmercifully. He always bore it good naturedly, and had very little to say.

"One evening we were sitting around, as usual, with one or two quiet little games going on, when Nye walked in and took a seat in a corner. The boys began to joke and chaff him as usual, but he paid no attention, and finally bent over and rested his face in his hands with a terribly sorrowful air. Pretty soon a tear trickled down his cheek. That changed things at once. One of the men touched him on the shoulder and said: 'What's the matter, pard? You mustn't mind our chin. We didn't have no intention of hurting your feelings.'

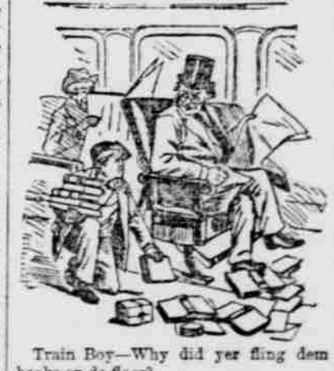
"Bill shook his head sadly and said: 'No, 'taint that. It's my pard, poor John. Poor, poor John! My best friend has turned up. His spirit departed an hour ago.'

"Well, the boys were a good deal taken aback. Bill's pard was a tenderfoot by the name of John Stover, who had come out for his health as much as dust. He was there in the barroom the night before, and of course we were surprised to hear that he'd passed in his checks. Somebody proposed that we go over and see the remains, so we formed a little procession, and Bill led the way.

"When we reached the little shanty Bill pushed open the door, struck a light, and led us to the bed. He pulled back the blankets and pointed to a big empty demijohn lying there. 'There,' said he, 'is the body of my poor old pard. His spirit has fled.'

"Nobody else had a word to say. We just marched back to the barroom, and if Bill Nye didn't get full that night he had a pretty strong head. And he didn't have to pay for any liquor all the time he staid in that camp."—Boston Herald.

The Worm Turns.



Train Boy—Why did yer fling dem books on de floor?

Passenger—Why did you fling them on me?—Puck.

The Difference.

Sunday School Teacher—And now we have learned a good deal about young David, and the chief thing for you to remember is that he was such a manly boy; and I hope that you will all pattern after him, and be manly boys. Now, last Sunday we studied about Job. Which one of you boys can tell me some difference between David and Job?

Georgie Snoyl—I can, teacher.

Sunday School Teacher—I am very glad; and now tell the class, Georgie, what difference you think of.

Georgie Snoyl—David was a manly boy and Job was a boily man.—Boston Courier.